

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 /062 W
-----191427Z 085563 /43

P R 191140Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO AMCONGEN BOMBAY PRIORITY
AMCONGEN CALCUTTA PRIORITY
AMCONGEN MADRAS PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3499

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 7249

FOR PRINCIPAL OFFICERS FROM HOWARD SCHAFER

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IN
SUBJECT: REPORTING SCHEDULE ON STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

1. THE EMBASSY HAS DEVELOPED A REPORTING PROGRAM FOR
COVERAGE OF THE FORTHCOMING STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS AND
LOOKS FORWARD TO THE CONSULATES GENERAL AGAIN MAKING THE
VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION THEY PROVIDED IN OUR COVERAGE OF THE
LOK SABHA ELECTIONS. THE PROGRAM FOLLOWS THE GENERAL PATTERN
ESTABLISHED IN THE LOK SABHA EXERCISE. ALTHOUGH THERE WILL
PROBABLY BE LESS INTEREST IN WASHINGTON IN FOLLOWING THIS
CAMPAIGN THAN THE LOK SABHA WE DO BELIEVE THAT THE

OUTCOME MAY SHADOW SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE POWER
STRUCTURE OF INDIA, PERHAPS INCLUDING AN EVENTUAL RETURN TO
THE EARLIER SYSTEM OF POWERFUL STATE PARTY BOSSES INFLUENTIAL
IN DETERMINING CENTRAL POLICIES. HENCE, ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT PLAN
TO SUBMIT TO WASHINGTON REPORTS AS COMPREHENSIVE AS THOSE
WE SENT IN DURING THE LOK SABHA CAMPAIGN, WE WOULD APPRECIATE
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RECEIVING FOUR OUR OWN BACKGROUND PURPOSES YOUR DETAILED
INPUTS ALONG THE LINES SET FORTH BELOW. AS BEFORE, WE'D
EXPECT THAT IN ADDITION TO SUBMITTING CONTRIBUTIONS CALLED
FOR IN THE PROGRAMS, THE CONGENS WILL CONTINUE THEIR USUAL
EXCELLENT SPOT REPORTING OF SIGNIFICANT ELECTORAL DEVELOPMENTS
AS THEY OCCUR.

2. BY MID-DAY TUESDAY, MAY 24, WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE CONGEN ASSESSMENTS OF THE TICKET DISTRIBUTION AMONG CONGRESS AND JANATA CANDIDATES IN THE STATES WHERE ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SIMILAR EVALUATIONS FOR OTHER SIGNIFICANT PARTIES WHICH ARE CONTESTING SUCH AS CPM IN WEST BENGAL AND AIADMK IN TAMIL NADU. SPECIFICALLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT SORT OF PEOPLE ARE RUNNING, WHICH CONSTITUENTS OF THE JANATA RECEIVED DISPROPORTIONATE SHARES OF TICKETS, WHAT DISAFFECTIONS HAVE THEREBY RESULTED, AND HOW THIS DISAFFECTION COULD AFFECT PARTY PROSPECTS IN THE POLL AND JANATA UNITY AT THE CENTER. WE WOULD EXPECT TO USE THESE ASSESSMENTS IN A MESSAGE WE PLAN TO SUBMIT TO THE DEPARTMENT ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 25.

3. ON THE 25TH WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE CONGEN ASSESSMENTS OF ELECTORAL ALLIANCES AND SEAT ADJUSTMENTS AMONG PARTIES AND HOW THIS MIGHT AFFECT THE OUTCOME. THERE WOULD BE INCLUDED IN AN EMBASSY ASSESSMENT MESSAGE THE FOLLOWING DAY.

4. ON THURSDAY, JUNE 2 AND 9, WE WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE CONGEN WRAP-UPS ON HOW THE ELECTIONS ARE SHAPING UP IN YOUR AREAS. SPECIFIC POINTS OF INTEREST INCLUDE: PRESENCE AND IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL ISSUES, PROBLEMS WHICH COULD AFFECT THE OUTCOME, COHESIVENESS OF PARTIES AND ALLIANCES, HOW LOSERS IN THE TICKET SCRAMBLE MIGHT AFFECT THE OUTCOME, WHAT THIS MIGHT PORTEND FOR JANATA AND CONGRESS UNITY AT THE CENTER, AND THE DEGREE OF FAIRNESS WITH WHICH THE CAMPAIGN IS BEING CONDUCTED. WE WOULD BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN YOUR VIEWS ON WHAT CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF THE

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JANATA APPEAR TO BE GAINING CONTROL OF THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS; WHO ARE THE LEADERS WHO ARE EMERGING AS POTENTIAL POWER BROKERS IN THE STATES AND ULTIMATELY AT THE CENTER. WE SUSPECT THAT THESE ELECTIONS WILL SEE THE EMERGENCE OF POWERFUL FIGURES WHO MAY EVENTUALLY CONTROL THE GOVERNMENT IN DELHI; WE WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN IDENTIFYING THEM. WHILE WE EXPECT TO AVOID SPECIFIC ATTEMPTS TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME TO WASHINGTON, WE MAY WANT TO SIGNAL GENERAL TRENDS AS THE CAMPAIGN PROGRESSES AND HENCE WOULD WELCOME ANY THOUGHTS WHICH YOU MIGHT PICK UP FROM YOUR SOURCES. WE'D SEND IN OUR ALL-INDIA ASSESSMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS (FRIDAY).

5. AS SOON AS THE OUTCOME HAS BECOME CLEAR, WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING YOUR EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS AND ANY THOUGHTS ON THE PROSPECTS FOR GOVERNMENT FORMATION AND STABILITY. WE WOULD HOPE TO HAVE YOUR INPUTS FOR OUR FINAL WRAP-UP MESSAGE BY JUNE 17, BUT DEPENDING UPON EVENTS AT THE TIME THIS DATE IS FLEXIBLE.

6. IN ADDITION TO MERGING YOUR INPUTS INTO OUR OVERALL
WRAP-UPS, WE ALSO PLAN TO POUCH TO THE INTERESTED OFFICES
IN THE DEPARTMENT ALL OF YOUR REPORTING. PLEASE LET US KNOW
IF THIS GENERAL APPROACH POSES ANY PROBLEMS, AND ANY OTHER
THOUGHTS YOU HAVE ON THE EXERCISE.
SCHNEIDER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INFORMATION CONTROL, PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NEWDE07249
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770178-0835
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770539/aaaabhsf.tel
Line Count: 122
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d9d8cc8f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2450352
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORTING SCHEDULE ON STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS
TAGS: PINT, IN
To: BOMBAY CALCUTTA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d9d8cc8f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009